

LINGEY HOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACTING HEADTEACHER: MRS J E JACKSON



Attendance Policy

Sept 2020 – Sept 2025



Attendance Policy

1. AIM

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential as it allows pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

At Lingey House Primary School we recognise the very strong link that exists between a pupil's level of attendance and their achievement. We therefore ask for 100% attendance, and aim for at least 95%.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at school, and the Head Teacher, staff and Governors at our school work together with children, parents, and other agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits.

Our attendance policy applies to all children registered at this school and is made available to all parents on our school website.

2. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act and Regulations of 2006 and 2010 parents are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly which means being at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is authorised by the Head Teacher.

The school is required to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. Parents are expected to contact school to inform them of the reason for their child's absence. The school will judge whether or not the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence and mark the register accordingly.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents

Under education law (section 576 of the Education Act 1996) a parent is defined as:-

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has responsibility for the care of a child or young person. This means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent.

It is also important to note that even though a parent may not live in the same home as the pupil that parent is still responsible for ensuring the child attends school every day.

Parents should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which may affect their child's attendance.

They are expected to notify the school promptly on the school telephone number if their child cannot attend and any absence will be recorded as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received.

Parents are discouraged from making medical or dental appointments during school time, and are only expected to remove their child from school for the minimum period of time when this is unavoidable.

School

Lingey House Primary School will encourage and value high levels of attendance. However, we recognise that many factors (in school and externally) can influence a pupil's attendance and will work in partnership with parents and other relevant agencies to resolve any issues.

The school will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with pupils and their parents and will provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements.

Pupils

Pupils will ensure that they attend school regularly, on time, and will not leave the school without permission.

4. REGISTRATION

Registration will be carried out twice a day. It is important that pupils arrive on time for registration as late comers cause disruption both to themselves and other pupils.

Morning registration is at 9.00am and the registers will close at 9.30am.

Afternoon registration is at 12.30pm (KS1) or 1.15pm (KS2) and the registers will close at 1.00pm (KS1) or 1.45pm (KS2).

The registers will be marked promptly at these times and should a pupil arrive after the start of registration but before the registers have closed he/she will be marked as late (L) for that session.

5. ABSENCE

All absences will be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. Should an explanation for an absence not be received or should the explanation be deemed unsatisfactory then that absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Pupil registration requirements

There are four broad classifications in attendance registers:

- **Present** – the pupil is on the premises at the time of registration.
- **Approved Educational Activity** – the pupil is engaged in an approved, supervised activity off site, for example, educational visit, sporting activity or work experience.
- **Authorised Absence** – an absence authorised by the school which includes illness, medical appointments, bereavement or other circumstances where the school deems attendance to be inappropriate.
- **Unauthorised Absence** – an absence where the school judges that the pupil does not have good cause to be missing from school. This includes action by parents who initiate or collude with unauthorised absence by pupil. For example, shopping trips, day trips, birthdays, or absence to look after someone else.

Parents should contact the school on the first day of any absence. The school will then decide whether or not the absence will be authorised.

6. PUNCTUALITY/LATENESS

Arrival before the registers have closed will result in a late mark being recorded in the register (L).

Arrival after the registers have closed without an acceptable reason will result in an unauthorised absence mark (U) and counts as an absence for that school session.

Pupils who arrive at school late should not be admitted to class until they have signed in at reception. This is important for health and safety reasons.

If a pupil is regularly late parents will be contacted and invited to a meeting with the Headteacher.

Persistent lateness after the register has closed can result in the school referring the matter to the Local Authority for formal action to be taken.

7. FIRST DAY CONTACT

The Admin staff with responsibility for Attendance will carry out the first day contact. This will involve telephoning, texting or emailing all parents whose child is absent but has not contacted school with an explanation.

There may be occasions when school staff will make home visits when there are concerns about persistent, sporadic or unexplained absence.

8. LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND TERM-TIME HOLIDAYS

Amendments to the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

A leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher will not authorise leave of absence for any holiday.

The Head Teacher must be satisfied that the exceptional circumstances justify an authorised absence and it is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information and evidence in order to establish this fact.

The request for an authorised leave of absence must be made at least two weeks in advance and the Head Teacher may invite the parent into school to discuss the request before a decision is made.

If the request for a leave of absence is refused and the absence is recorded as unauthorised, the Head teacher may refer the matter to the Local Authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued against the parent.

A Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if the notice is paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the Local Authority may prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies.

Where there is more than one child, each parent may be issued with a Penalty Notice in respect of each child.

9. PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING ABSENCE AND LATENESS

The school closely monitors individual pupil attendance and where there are concerns about poor attendance the school staged response will be implemented.

The staged response includes:-

- First day contact
- Discussion about attendance with the pupil (if age appropriate)
- Contact with the parent by telephone or letter to ensure they are aware of the attendance concerns
- An invitation for the parent to meet with the Head Teacher/senior member of staff to discuss attendance concerns
- Follow up meeting for the parent to meet with the Headteacher to review attendance after initial attendance concern meeting
- A home visit by attendance or home school liaison staff
- A request for medical information from parents advising them that further absences will not be authorised without such information.
- Use of School Governor Panels
- Completion of a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) to identify additional support needed
- Referral to outside agencies where appropriate

A 'Traffic Light Attendance Scheme' has been introduced at Lingey House.

As part of our attendance strategy, we will be monitoring and addressing patterns of school attendance through a traffic light system. Parents/carers will receive information about their child's 'Attendance Zone' at the end of each half term.

The 3 different attendance zones are:

Colour Zones	Attendance Thresholds
Green Zone	Attendance of 95% or above
Amber Zone	Attendance between 90% and 94.99%
Red Zone	Attendance below 90%

Green Zone

All pupils who are in the 'green zone' have an attendance of 95% or more. This zone recognises patterns of good to excellent school attendance. Pupils who fall within this band are more likely to do well at school and achieve good results.

Amber Zone

All pupils who are in the 'amber zone' have attendance between 90% and 94.9%. Pupils with this level of attendance are a cause for concern and are at risk of underachieving at school.

Red Zone

All pupils who are in the 'red zone' have an attendance level of below 90%. Pupils who fall within this zone are regularly absent from school and are significantly less likely to achieve their full potential.

We therefore, as a school, wish to work closely with parents/carers to help and support all pupils to move into or stay in the Green Zone

10. ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Once all school strategies have been tried but there is no improvement in the pupils attendance, the school may decide to refer the matter to the Local Authority for formal legal action. This can result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or prosecution in Magistrate's Court.

The fixed penalty fine is £60 if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days and if the fixed penalty is not paid, the case may proceed to the Magistrates Court for the original offence of failure to ensure your child's regular school attendance.

Prosecution in the Magistrates Court can result in a fine of up to £2500, a Parenting Order, a Community Order, or imprisonment.

11. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Lingey House Primary School implements a number of rewards and incentives, both on a class and individual basis including:-

- Golden time for the class with the highest weekly attendance
- Termly rewards for pupils achieving 100% attendance during the academic year
- Whole school class attendance league is displayed on the school website
- Class reward for the best termly attendance
- At the end of each week, pupils who have achieved 100% attendance are rewarded with one 'House Token'.

12. ATTENDANCE DATA

A range of attendance data will be collected and analysed each half term in order to identify individual pupils or groups of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern:

- whole school attendance rates
- numbers and proportion of persistent absentee pupils
- rates of unauthorised absence
- attendance/absence rates for particular cohorts and groups (year groups, gender, ethnicity, SEN, etc)

Attendance data will be used to set a range of attendance targets for the whole school, for identified cohorts and for individual pupils.

13. COMMUNICATION

The Lingey House Primary School's Attendance Policy will be communicated through:

- a précis in the parents' prospectus
- parents' information brochures
- the home-school agreement
- regular newsletter items
- guidance and advice in the staff handbook
- school website

14. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed when required by the Senior Management Team.

Written: September 2020

Date of next review: September 2025

Approved by Curriculum Committee on 16 September 2020

Appendix 1: Attendance During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

From September 2020, all pupils will be required to attend school. As such, the arrangements set out in the main body of this policy (above) will be adhered to. This appendix has been developed in line with the latest government guidance to set out the additional measures that have been put in place to support pupils' attendance at school.

1. Attendance expectations from September

- 1.1 From the beginning of the 2020/2021 academic year (September), attendance is mandatory for all pupils.
- 1.2 From September, the usual rules on school attendance (as set out in the main body of this policy) will apply, including:
 - Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly.
 - The school's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence, in line with the procedures in the main body of this policy.
 - The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with the LA's code of conduct.

2. Shielding or self-isolating pupils

- 2.1 Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August. This means that pupils who were shielding can return to school, as can pupils who have family members who were shielding.
- 2.2 Pupils who are no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional should discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school. Parents should inform the school of any particular measures that need to be in place to ensure their child can return to school safely.
- 2.3 The school understands that there will be occasions where some pupils may not be able to attend school due to coronavirus, including for the following reasons:
 - They are self-isolating and have symptoms of coronavirus or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus.
 - Rates of coronavirus in the local area have risen and certain individuals are asked to temporarily shield.
- 2.4 Absences relating to pupils following clinical and/or public health advice will not be penalised.
- 2.5 Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, they will be immediately offered access to remote learning, in line with the Pupil Remote Learning Policy.

3. Reluctance to return to school

- 3.1 Parents will be advised to contact the school if they have concerns about their child returning to school.
- 3.2 If a parent raises a concern, a relevant staff member will hold a discussion with the parent to discuss their concerns and provide reassurance on the measures that are in place to reduce risk in the school.

4. Monitoring attendance

- 4.1 The School Business Manager will monitor the school's attendance rates once the school is open to all pupils in September.
- 4.2 Any trends in non-attendance will be identified (e.g. due to anxiety) and measures will be put in place to reengage affected pupils with the school.